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CITRUS, HERNANDO AND PASCO LINKING UP FOR BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT MONTH



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Health departments in Citrus, Hernando and Pasco are teaming up with the Florida West Coast Breastfeeding Task Force to recognize August as Breastfeeding Support Month and World Breastfeeding Week (Aug. 1-7), a time to protect, promote and support breastfeeding and its impact on the health of the planet and its people.

To mark the celebration, the health departments are encouraging

breastfeeding families from all over the Tampa Bay area to come together to breastfeed and support each other at the Florida West Coast Breastfeeding Task Force's Virtual Latch On Celebration starting at 10 a.m. Friday thru Sunday, July 31 to Aug. 2 on Facebook Live.

The Facebook events will begin with giveaways and prizes on the Florida West Coast Breastfeeding Task Force's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FLWestCoastBreastfeedingTaskforce. Moms participating in the Latch can register for all three days by visiting <https://biglatchon.org/apps/locations> and selecting the Spring Hill location to be added to the global count.

"Especially now, while we deal with a global pandemic, it is important for parents and families around the world to know how important breastfeeding is in protecting infants from infection," said Maret Wachira, DOH-Citrus International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) and Advocacy Chair of the Florida West Coast Breastfeeding Task Force. "Not only does breast milk provide protection against many illnesses, but it is also sustainable and extremely important during a time of crisis."

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, breastmilk is considered to be an unlikely source of transmission of SARS-CoV-2, and the AAP strongly supports breastfeeding as the best choice for infant feeding.

If you are breastfeeding and have symptoms of or confirmed COVID-19, take steps to avoid spreading the virus to your baby:

- Wash your hands before touching your baby
- Wear a cloth face covering, if possible, while feeding at the breast
- Wash your hands before touching pump or bottle parts and clean all parts after each use

For more information about COVID-19 and breastfeeding, visit AAP's Parenting Website at www.healthychildren.org.

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